

Candidates oppose Loop 202 on Pecos Road

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It's a clean sweep. House candidates in Ahwatukee Foothills on both sides of the political aisle aren't happy with the South Mountain Loop 202 freeway, proposed to be constructed along Pecos Road.

At a GOP candidate's debate Thursday night, Frank Schmuck called the proposed freeway bad public policy and "ludicrous." Andy Swann told the crowd "We don't need to be tearing down homes." And Jeff Dial also said it was wrong, pointing out that Mountain Park Community Church, which he attends, is in the path of the freeway and would have to be torn down.

Incumbent Republican representative John McComish is already on the record opposing the freeway along Pecos Road and Democrat Rae Waters also opposes the freeway along Pecos Road.

The four Republicans will face off for two nominations in the Sept. 2 primary election, and will then run against Waters on the November general election ballot for two seats representing Ahwatukee Foothills and Legislative District 20.

The freeway was first planned in the mid 1980's but was put on the back burner because of funding shortfalls. A study to update the plan and take into account rapid growth over the past two decades was begun a few years ago. Since then, the cost of the freeway has grown from about \$900 million to \$1.7 billion and as many as 317 homes would need to be removed to make room for the 10-lane freeway.

For more on the candidates' debate, see the July 16 issue of the *Ahwatukee Foothills News* or visit www.ahwatukee.com.